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Jeremy Carroll

Theatre Arts professor Shanti Pillai stands at the main temple in Pondicherry, India with an elephant named Lakshmi. The elephant gives blessings to children and adults in the afternoon. Pondicherry is one of Pillai's research sites in India and is a place where she spent long periods of time since she was a child.

Theatre Arts professor **Shanti Pillai**, received a **Fulbright Scholarship** to conduct research in India, for her book "Feminist Kinesthesia: Women As Innovators of Contemporary Performance in India." To read more about Pillai's work, **see page 5**.

SENATE

Mondays may cause a shorter fall break

ASI discusses the fate of week-long fall breaks, Dale Lendrum speaks out against accusations of misogyny during election.

By James Chow
Staff Writer

Students, faculty and staff may be seeing a shorter fall break after Associated Students, Inc. discussed shortening the weeklong hiatus during their meeting on Wednesday.

ASI President Marvin Flores brought the subject to the floor.

The problem arose when Flores received a calendar of next term, which showed only 13 instructional Mondays available for the semester.

According to Flores, there is a law that mandates the university provides at least 15 instructional Mondays.

"We are trying to figure out whether or not we should have the whole week off for fall break," Flores said. "But this would leave us with a shortage of instructional days, and we would have to find another Monday to add."

Part of the shortage of instructional Mondays is due to fall term including both Labor Day and Veteran's Day, two holidays that fall on the first work day of the week.

Flores suggested an alternative that would allow classes to continue on the Monday and Tuesday of the week of fall break.

Both days would switch schedules. When Flores suggested this to the Senate, the senators and the spectators immediately began murmuring while sporting looks of confusion. A majority voice in the room voiced support for a full break.

Flores said he'll give an update on the matter at next week's ASI meeting.

During public comments, former Secretary of System Wide Affairs and presidential candidate Dale Lendrum spoke of student leaders "hijacking the [presidential] campaign" after claiming rumors about him being misogynistic circulated in ASI.

Lendrum said his campaign team subsequently abandoned him in favor of "improv[ing] their chances of get-

see **BREAK**, page 2

HATE CRIME

Anti-Semitism up 40% nationwide, new study finds

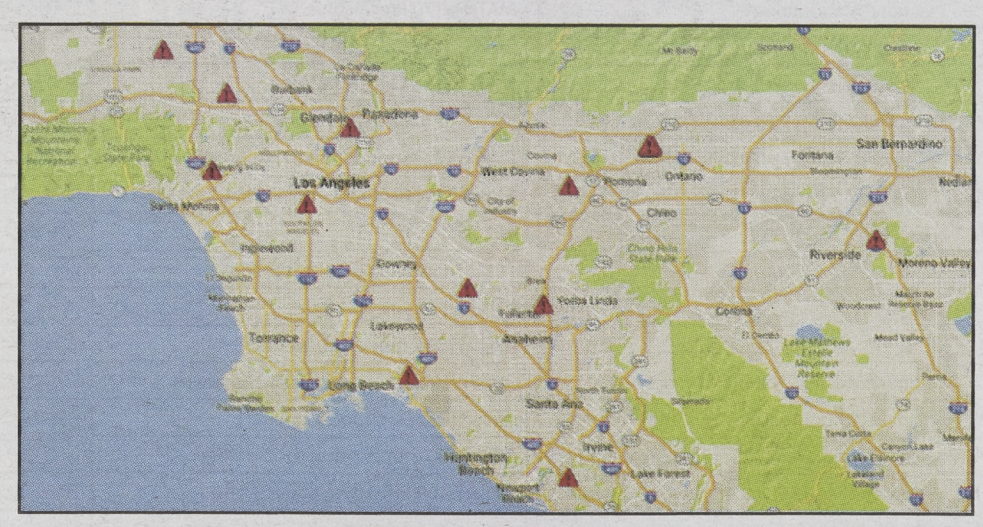
CSULB shows up on interactive maps tracking Anti-Semitic incidents.

By Adam R. Thomas
Staff Writer

The Jewish non-profit organization AMCHA Initiative has released its annual study, which states that anti-Semitism has increased on college campuses nationwide by 40 percent in 2016. "Amcha" is the Hebrew word for "your people," or "your nation."

Cal State Long Beach also appeared on the group's website, specifically on several interactive maps meant for tracking anti-Semitic hate crimes.

The study titled, "Antisemitism: At the Epicenter of Campus Intolerance," stated that the number of discrete anti-Semitic incidents rose on colleges throughout the U.S. However, the research also indicates that fewer colleges are experiencing incidents, showing a nine percent decrease compared to 2015.



Screenshot

The map from AMCHA Initiative notes where instances of Anti-Semitism on college campuses in the U.S.

The study's lead researchers, Tammi Rossman-Benjamin and Leila Beckwith, postulate that this trend is due to a rising number of "hotspots." The hotspot schools with the sharpest rise in anti-Semitic activity in 2016 were Columbia University, Vassar College, New York University, the University of Chicago and the University of Wisconsin Madison.

"It is important to point out that each of the schools [with the largest spikes in anti-Semitism] was one of the 11 schools whose student governments, graduate student associations or student bodies considered BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) resolutions in 2016, but not in 2015," wrote Rossman-Benjamin and Beckwith in the study. "This undoubtedly accounts for the surge in overall antisemitic [sic] activity."

The BDS movement is a global initiative organized and run by the Palestinian BDS National Committee that attempts to mount economic and political pressure against the state of Israel. The movement is controversial, as proponents compare it to anti-Apartheid movements in South Africa, while detractors say it promotes anti-Semitism and the delegitimization of Israel.

The AMCHA Initiative considers events or actions to be anti-Semitic on two main grounds:

see **STUDY**, page 2

STUDY

continued from page 1

"classic" anti-Semitism, related to hatred directed at Jewish students due to their ethnicity or religious practices, and anti-Zionism, related to actions made against or in protest of the state of Israel. According to the study's data and the press-release that came from the organization, the two types of activity are linked, which was consistent with its previous findings in the 2015 study.

One of the causes of multiple occurrences at CSULB came from a hacking incident in March 2016. Andrew "Weev" Auernheimer, a "notorious neo-Nazi hacker troll" according to Matt Coker of the OC Weekly who covered the incident, accessed public Wi-Fi networks on colleges throughout the country to print anti-Semitic fliers on several college campuses, including CSULB. The fliers featured swastikas and advocated that white men should "join us in the struggle for white supremacy" at the Daily Stormer, a neo-Nazi website.

Another CSULB incident that appeared on the AMCHA website's interactive map was related to the defacement of a poster advertising history professor and chair of Jewish Studies Jeffrey Blutinger's Spring 2017 class on Israel's history, people and cultures. Someone had written, "not a valid course, Israel is occupied territory," on the poster.

"That's when I made the really, really big fliers," Blutinger said of the incident. "Where as before there was a small flier there was now a really big flier that I put up. That was sort of my response. I'm really surprised that it shows up on their website, it was one single flier."

> "Can you be anti-Zionist without being anti-Semitic? Yes, but it depends on why you're anti-Israel. If you mean 'anti-Israel' as someone who criticizes Israeli policies, then by no means is that anti-Semitic, in the same way as someone who criticizes the policies of the US government is anti-American. If I don't like Vladimir Putin, that doesn't mean I'm anti-Russian.
>
> *Jeffrey Blutinger, Chair of Jewish Studies*

A third incident listed on the AMCHA website referred to the CSULB campus group Students for Justice in Palestine's annual Israel Apartheid Wall, which they listed as advocating for the BDS movement.

Blutinger stated that he does not share AMCHA's opinion that anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism are always directly related, and said the issue is a complicated one.

"I think we have to be really careful about distinguishing between anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism," Blutinger said. "Can you be anti-Zionist without being anti-Semitic? Yes, but it depends on why you're anti-Israel. If you mean 'anti-Israel' as someone who criticizes Israeli policies, then by no means is that anti-Semitic, in the same way as someone who criticizes the policies of the US government is anti-American. If I don't like Vladimir Putin, that doesn't mean I'm anti-Russian."

However, Blutinger stated that if someone opposes the idea of Israel as an ethno-state exclusively without opposing either nationalistic states or ethno-states in general, then the cause of the anti-Zionism is likely also anti-Semitic.

"You have to be consistent," Blutinger said. "If you say you oppose Zionism because of ethnic nationalism, then I assume you also oppose the creation of a Palestinian state, which is also an ethnic nationalist state. Usually, no, they don't. Then there's a disconnect between what somebody says they believe, and what they're actually advocating."

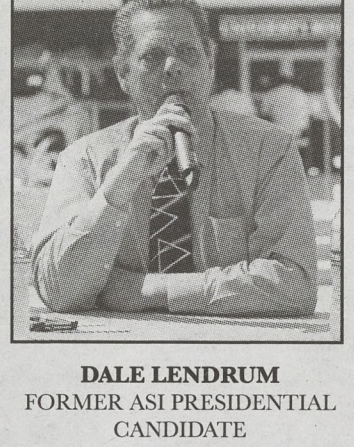
Blutinger also said that AMCHA often promotes an agenda that is oriented with the political right in Israel, and he often didn't share their views,

BREAK

continued from page 1

-ting elected."

He also claims that ASI Vice President Logan Vournas undermined his former position of Sec. of SWA and helped "Moving Forward Together" - president-elect Daniel Gomez, vice president-elect Joe Nino and treasurer-elect Jonathan Wanless — win the campaign.



DALE LENDRUM
FORMER ASI PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

Lendrum said he did well in lighting a fire under the California State Student Association, after the organization received backlash for charging students of the $2 Student Involvement Representation Fee.

He claims that CSSA is "more transparent, equitable, student-focused and courageous enough to make bold decisions," and such efforts should be "celebrated, not undermined."

"Vournas went above and beyond ethical boundaries of offering campaign and election advice to MFT to ensure them victory," Lendrum said. "My name was smeared, my work and position was undermined for personal and political purposes."

Senator-at-large Yasmeen Azam came to the defense of Vournas.

"Sometimes you'll have people come in and... make allegations that are inaccurate," Azam said referring to Dale Lendrum's comments.

"It's not selfish to challenge structures that may not be putting student interests [first]," Azam continued, poking at CSSA's policies. "We [the ASI Senate] put work before ourselves and our egos."

ASI also passed resolutions that would establish Jewish and Muslim Ally training and a resolution that would make the University Student Union and the Student Recreation and Wellness Center safe spaces for undocumented students for their final readings.

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ENVIRONMENT

Conservation group first to file border lawsuit

First lawsuit filed to block Trump border wall that would start in San Diego.

By Joshua Emerson Smith
The San Diego Union-Tribune

SAN DIEGO – The Center for Biological Diversity, a nationally known environmental group, on Wednesday filed a legal challenge against the Trump administration over its proposed U.S.-Mexico border wall that would start in San Diego County.

This is the first lawsuit concerning the president's border wall plan. Joining the center in the litigation is Rep. Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., who serves as ranking member of the House Committee on Natural Resources.

The small but influential wildlife conservation group argues that construction of a barrier from San Diego to Texas would have "disastrous" impacts on jaguars, wolves and more than 100 other species in the border region.

President Donald Trump's "ugly wall will do little more than divide and destroy our magnificent borderlands," Kieran Suckling, executive director of the Center for Biological Diversity, said in a statement. "If we're going to stop it, we have to make a stand right now."

The lawsuit specifically targets the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which would oversee the wall project. The agency declined to respond to the litigation, citing standard policy.

Carolyn Cole | Los Angeles Times

A rare sighting of a bobcat near the U.S.-Mexico border, one of the many animals that would be affected by the reinforced border wall.

Currently, the entire U.S.-Mexico border has 653 miles of fencing. In San Diego County, where the border with Mexico is 60 miles long, there are 46 miles of barriers. That includes 13 miles of double fencing in areas along the San Diego-Tijuana corridor where nightly mass crossings of hundreds of immigrants were once common.

Trump is asking Congress for nearly $1 billion to begin construction of his envisioned border wall, including money for the 14 remaining miles of terrain in San Diego County that currently don't have fencing as well as 14 other miles in the region slated for replacement work.

The Center for Biological Diversity, which prides itself on its legal strategies, said it's gearing up for a court battle and has launched an online fundraising page to help pay for its efforts.

The group has filed more than a half-dozen other lawsuits against the Trump administration, including cases seeking to protect coyotes from pesticides and to prevent wolves from being shot at bait stations in Alaska's national wildlife refuges.

MEETING

City council vacates alley in downtown LB

Officials move to fence off alley due to lack of public use.

By Samantha Diaz
Staff Writer

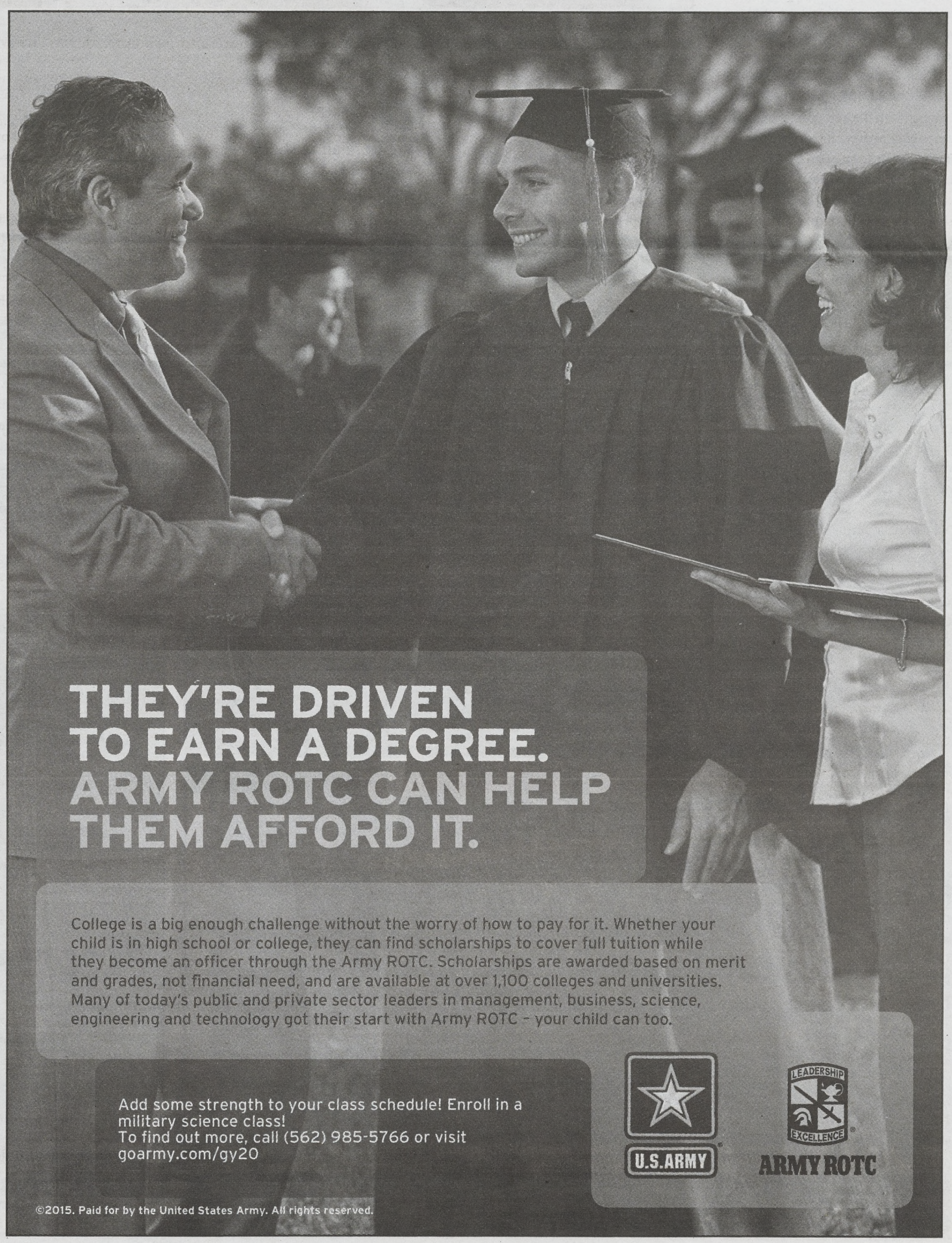
Long Beach City Council moved to vacate an alley between Elm avenue and Long Beach boulevard after deciding that there is no public use available for the alley.

City staff have been looking into possible uses for the alley since the item was first brought to the floor on March 7. Since then, the city has decided to fence off the area in order to prevent any unauthorized use of the alley.

The only public comment on the matter came from one unnamed female citizen at the session, who urged the council to consider using the alley in a way that could benefit the homeless. She proposed installing public showers and a food clinic in the empty space, claiming that there were many volunteers in the neighborhoods surrounding the lot that could help with the efforts.

FAST FACTS
ADDITIONAL COUNCIL ITEMS:

- Temporary limitation on the issuance of permits allowing unattended donation/recycling boxes
- Fiscal year 2016 Port Security Grant Program received a $1,125,450 grant from the Department of Homeland Security
- California Military Department will occupy empty lot on East 7 Street.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STUDENT TRIUMPH

Drone alternative for CSULB parking

Stellar Aerial Robotics wins top prize at the 2017 Innovation Challenge.

By Connie Ojeda
Staff Writer

Courtesy of CSULB

The seven STAR presentors were photographed with their drone prototype after their victory at the 2017 Innovation Challenge

Camping out in an engineering classroom until midnight the night before competition was worth the dedication for the Stellar Aerial Robotics team, which won a $50,000 prize April 6 at Cal State Long Beach's 2017 Innovation Challenge, for the creation of a license-plate recognition drone.

Represented by seven members of the 23-person team, STAR captured the attention of a panel of judges through the presentation of their innovative product, designed to reduce traffic interference caused by parking enforcement when issuing tickets at local colleges.

Team founder and junior aerospace major Donald Truong said he initially came up with the idea of creating the license-plate recognition drone after being made late to an exam by slow-moving parking enforcement.

"If you go down the road and go very slow and then have to scan the cars very slowly, you interfere with student traffic," said Truong as he explained the current ticketing process. "I feel like there are things they can do more efficiently."

Being that the panel of judges agreed with STAR's goal toward improved efficiency, the team, which was up against three others, walked away with a top prize of $40,000 in services for space, marketing, legal and accounting services, and $10,000 in seed funding meant for the start-up of the business.

Grace Ji, a 21-year-old business management major whose focus was the manufacturing and operations of the drone, said she did not anticipate the win.

"We were all in shock, we couldn't believe it." said Ji, leader of the logistics group. "I'm blessed for the opportunity and to be a part of this team."

Although the presentation of such a product proved to be successful at the Innovation Challenge, creating a license-plate recognition drone was quite a challenge, as it required a lot of dedication and a specialization across fields.

Computer science and finance major Elizabeth Him, who is also the marketing director for STAR, said, "The night before the ceremony the whole team camped out in an engineering building until midnight to help Donald and I rehearse our presentation."

Him, who presented along side of Truong, drafted a business plan and conducted market research which received positive feedback from Cal State University Fullerton, Cal State University Dominguez Hills, Fullerton College, El Camino College, UC Irvine, and ultimately CSULB, their target audience for the project.

> "We were all in shock, we couldn't believe it. I'm blessed for the opportunity and to be a part of this team."
>
> *-Grace Ji, business management*

Aside from Him, Caitlin Rubia, also a computer science major, helped Truong with the presentation by giving feedback and advice when answering judge's questions during the innovation challenge.

Rubia can also be credited for the creation of the abbreviated version of the team name, which Truong initially created.

Other team leaders include: Computer science major Patricia Echual, 21, who was in charge of coding and designing the software necessary for the processing of images on the drone's camera; Inna Echual, 21, an electrical engineering major, who designed the component of the flight controller; Paul Delgado, 22, a mechanical engineering major, in charge of designing the drones controller, frame and housing; and Ryan Chu, an animation major, in charge of directing the animation short film for the presentation.

Chu, the newest addition to the team, said he and Amro Emghaoech joined STAR two weeks ago after seeing an advertisement seeking the help of experienced animators.

"What I planned to do with the animation project was to entertain the audience, alleviating the professional tension, so they could at least enjoy what they were watching, and at the same time see what the teams product can do," Chu said.

Despite being eager to begin business and reach out to potential consumers, STAR's future projections are not set in stone yet.

Truong said the team is still working with the school of business to complete the official prototype prior to beginning its business ventures later in 2017.

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TEACHER FEATURE

Fulbright awarded to professor Shanti Pillai

Jeremy Carroll

Professor Shanit Pillai practices the classical performance form of bharatanatyam.

CSULB Theatre Arts professor to conduct research in India.

By Sommer Dalton
Staff Writer

The Cal State Long Beach houses some exceptional students, and some exceptional faculty, like assistant professor of Theatre Arts Shanti Pillai, who was recently awarded a Fulbright scholarship to conduct research for nine months in India.

Fulbright is a program that has aided in the academic growth of students and scholars alike since 1946. When awarded, the grant will enable Pillai to do research in India, and eventually publish her book. The proposal is titled "Feminist Kinesthesia: Women As Innovators of Contemporary Performance in India."

"It's about the roles of women in this new world of contemporary performance in India, and how that relates to traditional practices and forms of art training," Pillai said.

Pillai examines how women are creating work that not only addresses the social issues of their country, but also explores the theatrical and artistic form that communicates those messages.

"It's interesting to observe how women have been particularly instrumental in their contributions to this sort of growing social world of contemporary performance," Pillai said. "Not just in terms of the work they're making, but also in the institutions they are creating such as art centers, programs, and universities."

Pillai holds a B.A. in anthropology and international relations from Stanford University, an M.A. in Asian studies from the University of California at Berkeley, and a Ph.D. in performance studies from New York University. Her fellow colleagues recognize her as a powerhouse on campus.

"She is a phenomenal scholar, aspiring mentor, a strong teacher and a great colleague," said Jeff Janisheski, Theatre Arts Department Chair. "That's why I love being chair and working in this profession, I get to be surrounded by incredible people like her."

Pillai hopes that her book will inform people about the work these women are doing. Her research will take place from January to December of 2018.

"The whole department is utterly thrilled for Shanti," Janisheski said. "She is the most deserving team member and inspiring scholar/artist."

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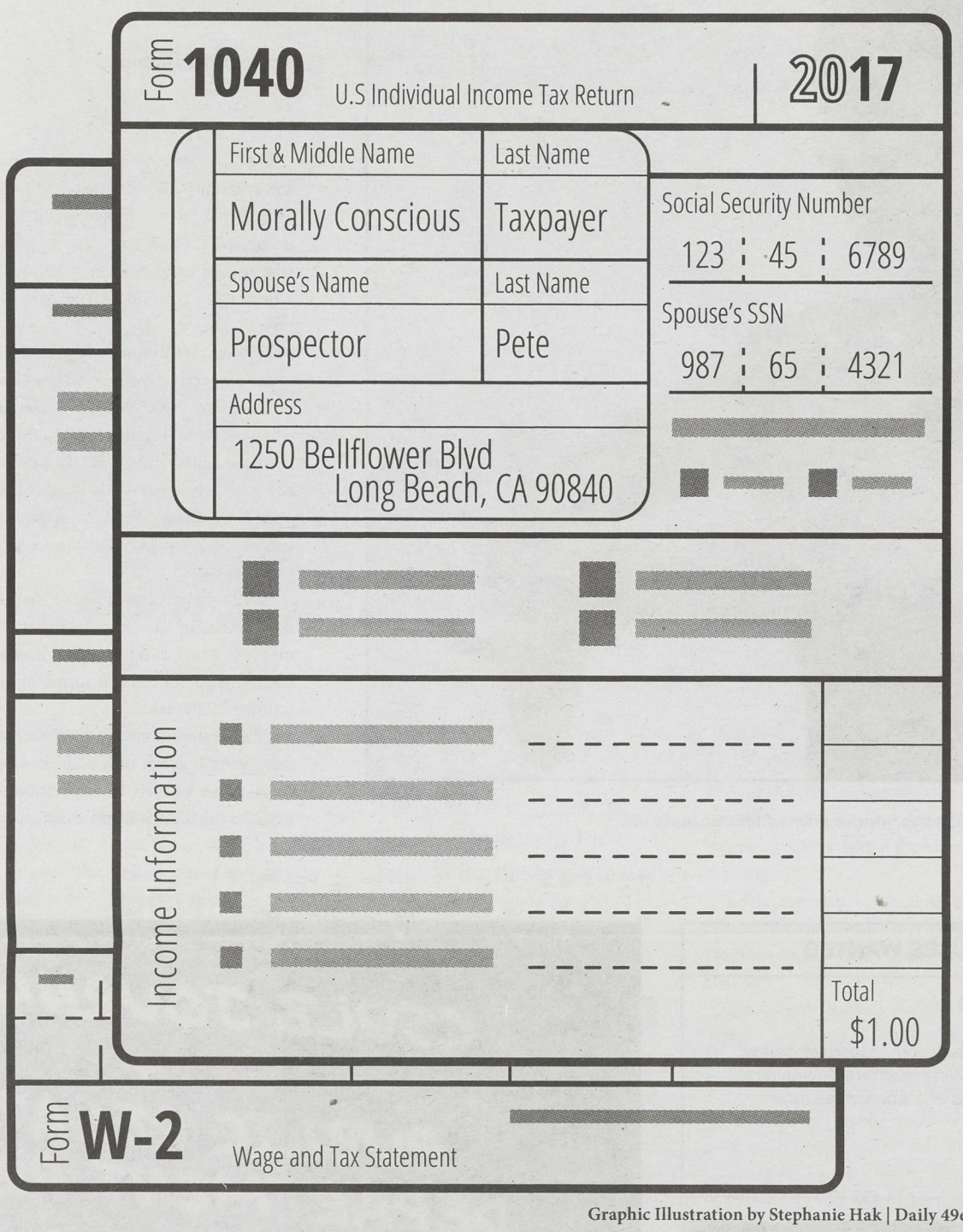
FINANCES

Trump gets lax on tax

Americans continue scramble during tax season while the federal government cuts tax agency spending.

By Doyle McManus
Los Angeles Times



Graphic Illustration by Stephanie Hak | Daily 49er

If you're still laboring over your tax forms to meet the April 18 filing deadline, here's a comforting thought: Unless you made well over $1 million, and unless your financial life is as complicated as, say, Donald Trump's, your chances of being audited are getting ever closer to zero.

The Internal Revenue Service says it will process 152 million individual tax returns this year; only about a million returns will trigger an audit. That's roughly two-thirds of 1 percent — the lowest rate in more than a decade.

There's a simple reason for that decline: Since 2010, Congress has reduced the tax agency's budget by roughly 17 percent in real dollars. Spending on tax enforcement, including audits, has been cut even more deeply, almost 30 percent.

As a result, the federal government is losing at least $7 billion in revenue each year, according to tax expert William G. Gale of the Brookings Institution.

A smart businessman would look at those numbers and say: That's nuts.

That's what Steven Mnuchin, the Los Angeles banker who became Trump's treasury secretary, concluded when he took his first look at the IRS.

"I was particularly surprised ... that the IRS headcount has gone down quite dramatically," Mnuchin told senators at his confirmation hearing. "Especially for an agency that collects revenues, this is something that I'm concerned about."

A stronger IRS, Mnuchin said, could reduce the federal budget deficit by closing the "tax gap," the more than $450 billion difference between what the federal government is owed and what it actually collects.

"This is one of the areas where I think we will all agree: to the extent we add resources, we can collect more money," he said.

And he was sure the president, another hard-headed businessman, would agree. "We add people and we make money, he'll get that completely. That's a very quick conversation with Donald Trump." That was before Mnuchin collided with Mick Mulvaney, Trump's new budget director.

Mulvaney, a former member of Congress, was a leader of the House Freedom Caucus, many of whose members say they'd like to abolish the IRS entirely. Mulvaney and his colleagues have been working to cut the IRS budget for years.

A few weeks after Mnuchin's testimony, Mulvaney released Trump's first-draft budget proposal. It proposed cutting $239 million from the IRS.

Mulvaney hasn't explained why he chose that number; most of the media attention went to programs that were being slashed even more deeply, including the State Department and social services.

But he gave a clue to his thinking last year, when he co-sponsored a bill to impeach IRS Commissioner John Koskinen, ostensibly for failing to cooperate with congressional investigations.

"Who's going to come rushing to the defense of the IRS?" Mulvaney said then.

It would be hard to find a clearer collision between the two cultures of the Trump administration: the pragmatists like Mnuchin, many of them former Democrats, who came to Washington to run the federal government more like a business, and conservative hard-liners like Mulvaney, who want to shrink the federal government more than they want to run it.

If Trump is thinking clearly about the wrenching changes he's seeking in the federal budget _ large-scale tax cuts, domestic spending cuts, and a big increase in defense spending, he'll listen to Mnuchin's argument about revenue.

The IRS and outside experts estimate that every additional dollar spent on tax enforcement will produce at least $6 in revenue. That's a return on investment any businessman would love.

There's another reason Trump should want to spend more money on tax enforcement: civic virtue.

"Americans see taxpaying ... as a civic duty and a moral obligation," argues political scientist Vanessa Williamson, author of "Read My Lips," a new book on public attitudes about taxes. "Even for very conservative Americans, being a taxpayer is shorthand for being an upstanding, contributing citizen."

Americans pay their taxes voluntarily at a rate higher than many other nationalities, she notes. The reason, she said, is something economists call "tax morale" _ "the social norm that we share, that if everyone else is chipping in I should do my part too."

A recent Pew Research poll found that 71 percent of Americans think not reporting all your income is "morally wrong." That includes 78 percent of Republicans and 68 percent of Democrats.

What does the IRS enforcement budget have to do with tax morale? If fewer returns are audited, tax experts fear the social norm in favor of honesty will erode the same way police believe broken windows wear down the sense of order in an urban neighborhood.

If the system is not viewed as fair, overall compliance rates are going to drop," Koskinen said. "If someone paying their fair share of taxes sees others who don't, and those others get away with it, that taxpayer may be a lot less motivated."

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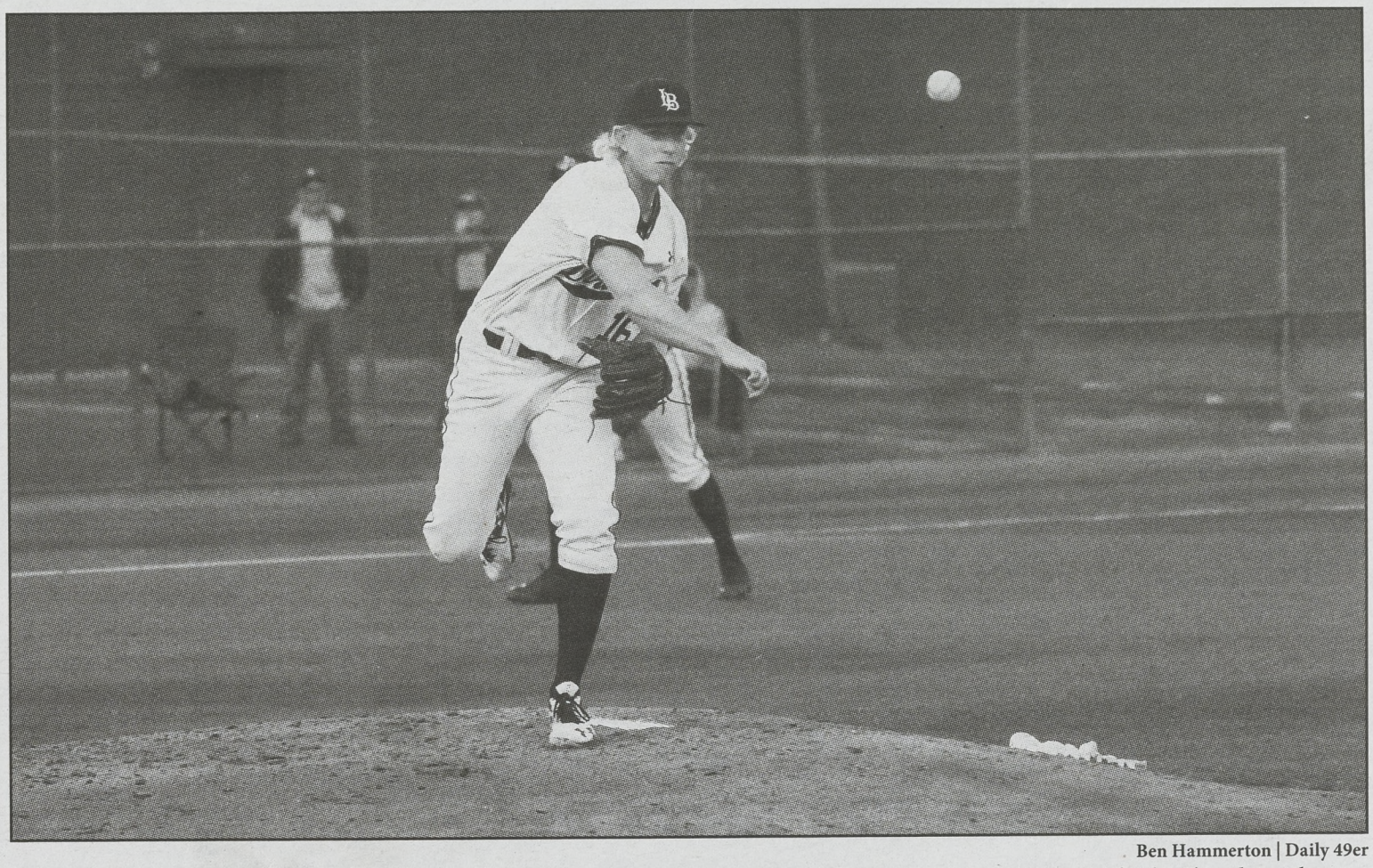

Ben Hammerton | Daily 49er

Junior pitcher Darren McCaughan will look to keep his success on the mound when he and the Dirtbags take Cal State Northridge Thursday night at Blair Field.

BASEBALL

Blair Field advantage is evident

Long Beach State will look to continue early conference success against Cal State Northridge.

By Matthew Simon
Sports Editor

Long Beach State is on a roll. With 14 wins in its last 16 games, the 49ers have been dominant on the mound and at the plate.

The No. 12 Dirtbags (20-11, 5-1) will look to keep up their recent success when they host Cal State Northridge for a weekend series starting tonight at 6 at Blair Field.

Coach Troy Buckley knows his team is gaining momentum, but doesn't worry that they will let the national recognition will make the team too confident.

"You got to have a lot of respect for the process," Buckley said. "You have to have a lot of respect for the game, and you have to continue to stick to routine no matter what's coming, what's going well and what's not going well."

Junior pitcher Darren McCaughan will look to get the Dirtbags off to a good start when he starts the weekend series on the mound tonight.

LBSU will look to sweep the Matadors after only winning 2 of 3 last year in Northridge.

"I think you have to rely on the leadership of the guys on the field and in the clubhouse," Buckley said. "It's a long year, there's a lot of baseball left and you take care of what's in front of you now."

BIG WEST STANDINGS

	SCHOOL	OVERALL W - L	CONFERENCE W - L
1	Cal State Fullerton	21-10	5 - 1
2	Long Beach State	20-11	5 - 1
3	Cal Poly	12-18	4 - 2
4	Cal State Northridge	13-16	3 - 3
5	UC Santa Barbara	12-17	2 - 4
6	UC Davis	9-16	2 - 4
7	Hawai'i	19-11	1 - 2
8	UC Irvine	12-16	1 - 2
9	UC Riverside	12-15	1 - 5

BASEBALL UPCOMING GAMES:

LB vs. CSUN Matadors
When: Today, 6 p.m.
Where: Blair Field

LB vs. CSUN Matadors
When: Friday, 6 p.m.
Where: Blair Field

LB vs. CSUN Matadors
When: Saturday, 2 p.m.
Where: Blair Field

LB vs. UCLA Bruins
When: Tuesday, 6 p.m.
Where: Los Angeles

LB vs. UCI
When: Friday, 6:30 p.m.
Where: Irvine

LB vs. UCI
When: Saturday, 2 p.m.
Where: Irvine

LB vs. UCI
When: Sunday 1 p.m.
Where: Irvine

D49er SPORTS

Follow @49ERSPORTS for live tweeting of LBSU games.

BASEBALL

Rising to the occassion

After injury, Long Beach State senior first baseman becomes leader on and off the field.

By Luke Ramirez
Assistant Sports Editor

Amidst the No. 12 Long Beach State Dirtbags' recent turnaround is a pitcher who was given a great opportunity and hasn't looked back since. Senior Dave Smith has had a roller coaster of a college career but now finds himself as one of the key aspects of the Dirtbags' success in 2017.

Thrust into the Sunday starting role on March 26 against Cal State Fullerton, Smith shined and threw 7 1/3 scoreless innings and struck out five batters in only his second start. LBSU swept CSUF for the first time in 15 years, thanks in part to Smith's performance in the final game.

"It was a huge game not having swept them in so long and the momentum that it gave us for the start of conference was a big deal," Smith said. "I would say that was the biggest start of my career."

> "I want to be remembered as someone who played hard and came to practice everyday with the intention to get better.
>
> *-Dave Smith, Sunday pitcher*

Since then, Smith has hit his stride, winning his next two starts, improved his record to 3-1 and lowered his ERA to 0.86. Many fans have enjoyed watching his recent pitching performances but none more than Smith's father, Hal.

"It's been awesome to watch him these last couple of weeks," Hal Smith said. "It doesn't surprise me, it's just great to see that it's finally coming to fruition."

Smith was a very good pitcher at Elk Grove High School and lead his team to a CIF championship as a senior in 2013. He signed with Nevada Reno in the same year, but new coaches came in to take over the program and forced him to have to try out for team.

"He gave me a chance to make the team in the fall but I was already under the impression that I was on the team," Smith said. "I was shocked when they ended up letting me go."

Smith decided that a tryout was not the way he wanted to go and with no other real interest from four-year schools, he decided to take the junior college route. "I was angry because I didn't feel like I was informed about the situation," Smith said. "I didn't really have another option but at the same time it gave me a chip on my shoulder to get back into D-1 baseball and try to prove myself."

The 6-foot-4 right hander did just that in his two years pitching for Cosumnes River College, posting an 8-1 record with a 1.66 ERA and a 0.93 WHIP as a sophomore.

Smith talked about how the junior college route helped shaped him into the pitcher he is today; "A lot of junior college guys play with a chip on their shoulder because maybe they've had to work harder to get to the division 1 level."

The interest from division one schools started to roll in as Smith heard from programs like Loyola Marymount (where current LBSU pitching coach Dan Ricabal was coaching at the time) and LBSU. Smith chose to make the move to southern California and be a part of the Dirtbags' storied program.

"I always just thought that Long Beach was a cool place to play...hearing about all the major leaguers that have come through there," Smith said. "I knew that it would be a team that could make some noise in the Big West, which is a good conference, and it would be a place where I could play as well."

Smith struggled in his junior season for LBSU, posting a 3-3 record with a 6.86 ERA, mostly starting midweek games.

"Obviously, I had a bad statistical year but I think I did a lot of growing as a person, as a pitcher as well and as a teammate," Smith said. "There were times where I let myself think that the environment was bigger than it really was and had some thoughts of 'I don't belong here' crawl into my head."

LBSU head coach Troy Buckley also mentioned Smith playing during the summer led to some of his success this season.

"He came into the program kind of how we recruited him and then we kind of let him go and there wasn't a lot of success so then we had to make some adjustments with him," Buckley said. "He had to deal with adjustments in the middle of the season."

Having to bounce back from the down year, Smith continued to work through the offseason and returned to the team in the fall ready to take on any role Buckley saw fit for him. That role wound up being the Saturday starting pitcher for the Dirtbags' first series of 2017 against Oklahoma.

"I was a little nervous but I always say if you're not nervous taking the mound the you're not there for the right reason."

Smith threw three innings and allowed one run to the Sooners in what would be his only start of the first half of the season. He would go on to make three appearances out of the bullpen for the Dirtbags up to the Arizona State series March 10-12.

When the team returned, Smith threw his routine bullpen at Blair Field during a Tuesday practice then made his way to CSULB's campus for a workout. Smith dropped a weight on his right big toe, fracturing it at the tip.

Ben Hammerton | Daily 49er

Long Beach State senior Dave Smith has become a reliable Sunday starter for the Dirtbags. The senior currently has the lowest ERA among the weekend starters.

"I didn't think it would end my season but I definitely thought it would be a setback," Smith said. "I thought I was starting to make some adjustments that were helping me throw the ball well and then I break my toe."

Smith's mother was a little more concerned when she heard the news.

"We honestly thought his season might be over," Barbara Smith said. "We were praying that it's not and God must have protected him because he didn't have any pain the next day and was back in a week."

In the CSUF series, juniors Darren McCaughan and John Sheaks opened with two starts that put LBSU in the position to sweep. The only problem was that the coaching staff still hadn't made their decision as to who would start Sunday's series finale.

"It was after the game when I was heading out of the clubhouse," Smith said. Coach Ricabal flagged me down and said, 'You got the ball.'"

Since then, Smith has looked like a whole new pitcher, winning his following two starts against UC Santa Barbara and UC Riverside.

"I think he's a lot more committed and a lot more confident from what he's doing," coach Troy Buckley said. "He's a lot more secure and I think a lot of it his mentality."

Smith will be graduating this spring and while he may not finish his career with the same statistics as the greats like Jered Weaver and Marco Estrada, there is no question that he is one of the most important players on the Dirtbags' roster when it comes to staying on the hot streak the are on right now.

"I want to be remembered as someone who played hard and came to practice everyday with the intention to get better," Smith said. "Also hopefully as someone who won a Big West championship ring and maybe a national championship as a part of this program. Ultimately, everyone who's been a part of this program is about putting banners up."